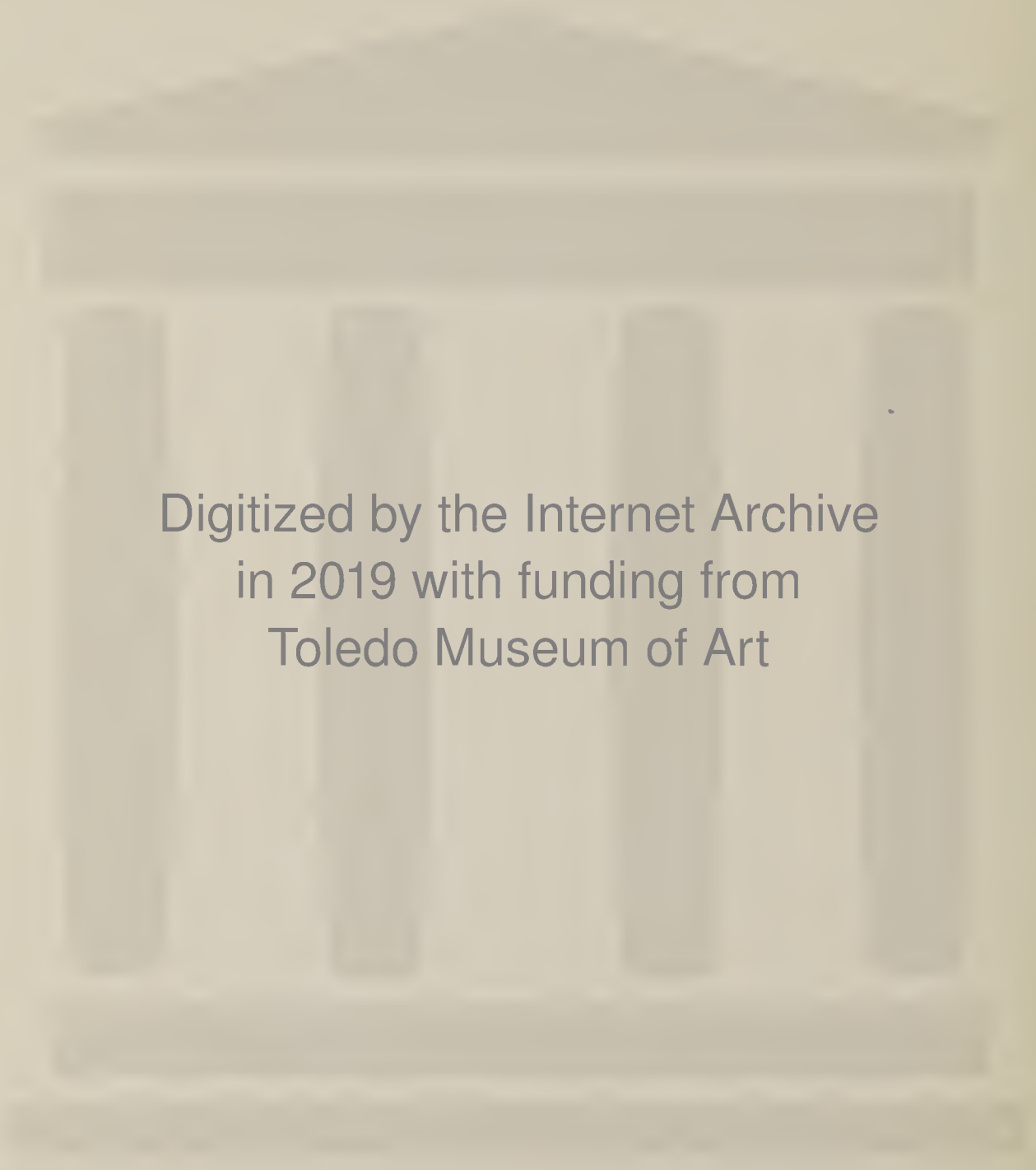


MUSEUM NEWS

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART

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NUMBER 92

TOLEDO, OHIO

DECEMBER, 1940



DECORATIVE DETAIL

VENETIAN GOBLET

GIFT OF EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY



THE TRIUMPHAL CAR

DETAIL OF THE VENETIAN GOBLET

produce of the Orient flowed through the Adriatic to her docks. This supremacy did not go unchallenged; at intervals during the next two centuries Venice and Genoa were at war over the possession of this rich trade.

After the final defeat of the Genoese in 1380 the Venetians sought and secured through a number of small wars control of a considerable territory on the mainland, giving a tax-free western outlet for her imports from the East. In 1453 Constantinople fell to the Turks, and Venice, to the horror of all Christendom, promptly made a treaty with them which preserved practically intact her commercial advantages. The fifteenth century marked, however, the height of her power, for toward its close the route to India around the Cape of Good Hope was discovered and thenceforth her trade began to decline. A few years later, in 1508, the League of Cambrai added to her growing difficulties by attempting the destruction of her empire, but diminished the effectiveness of the effort through jealousies among its own members. The disintegration which had set in was very slow and, strangely enough, Venice achieved her greatest artistic importance in her declining years. Giorgione, Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese, Sansovino, Palladio—all lived and worked after the wars of the League of Cambrai, and conferred upon her the immortal heritage of their artistic genius. It was also in the sixteenth century that Venice made her great contribution to the development of the art of glass making. It was then that her manufacturers produced a distinctly new type of



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glass, the paper-thin, crystal-clear ware for which the city is famous, and with which the history of modern glass begins.

The technical and artistic excellence of this *cristallo* presupposes an extensive previous experience in the fabrication of vessels of glass. Aside from the records of its manufacture spread upon the archives, pieces of Venetian origin exist which may be dated to the last fifty years of the fifteenth century. These are clear or colored glass decorated with opaque enamels in varying profusion and style.

The Saracenic glass makers of the Levant had been particularly proficient in the production of enameled glassware in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. During this time the Venetian traders had been in close contact with the Saracens through their outposts in Tyre and Sidon, which were not far from Damascus, the center of the manufacture of enamelled glass, and where, indeed, the art is practiced, in a debased form, even today. Our own Toledo Flagon, which we believe to have been made at Damascus, was carried to Spain about 1300. It is reasonable to believe that Saracenic glass formed a part of the commerce which was carried on by the Venetians, and that some quantity of it reached Venice. We have no assurance that Saracenic workmen ever followed in the wake of their wares and, lacking any documentary evidence, would be inclined to doubt that it occurred. There is far less reason to question that the Venetian artisans learned from them in their own land, and there is the practical certainty that they gained a knowledge of at least the enamel technique from the imported Saracenic



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wares. In 1224, just one hundred and one years after Venice had acquired its trading post in Tyre, members of the glass blower's guild were fined for infractions of the rules, and in 1268 water-bottles and scent-flasks, just the kind of things the Saracens made, were borne in the procession in honor of the accession of Doge Lorenzo Tiepolo.

The Aldevrandini Beaker,¹ the goblet from the Hope Collection,² (both in the British Museum) and two smaller goblets,³ (one in Sigmaringen, the other in Berlin) present a possible link between Syria and Venice. The inscription on the first, "Magister Aldevrandini me feci" might indicate a Venetian origin. Its enamel decoration, and that of the other three, is not characteristic of the Saracenic workmanship, although that of the Hope cup, in the use of red outlines for the foliate motifs, presents the closest analogy. The Gothic lettering of the inscriptions indicates European workmanship. But in all the form, with low foot-ring, slightly tapering cylindrical body and flaring mouth, is typically Saracenic. The possibilities suggested for the origin of these vessels include Islamic manufacture, or Venetian, or production by French workmen living in Syria. Another hypothesis, particularly in the case of the Aldevrandini Beaker, is that the glass itself might have been made in Syria and decorated at Venice. The crudity of the enameling is such that it hardly seems possible that foreign craftsmen in Syria, and much less Arabic artists, then (about 1300) producing some of the most glorious of such wares, could have been responsible for its decoration. There is no reason why Venetians, who had



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picked up the rudiments of the art in Syria, might not on returning to their homes have attempted, with just such a result, the embellishment of clear glass which they had brought along with them.

Despite the inscription, it is highly improbable that the Aldevrandini Beaker was made in Venice. Were it decorated there, which is at least possible, the art had progressed immeasurably in the century or so which preceded the production of the next earliest pieces which are known today. These follow the Arabic tradition in the use of opaque enamels and gilding. Their forms are derived from western prototypes in other materials and the scenes used in their decoration are of wholly western origin.

A substantial number of these enameled glasses of the last half of the fifteenth century still exist. The earliest,⁴ thought to have been made in 1465, and now in the Civic Museum, Bologna, follows the traditional form of the metal chalice, and is decorated with representations of the Adoration of the Kings, the Flight into Egypt, and the heads of two prophets. Others of profane rather than sacred form and decoration follow the shapes in common usage among the metalworkers. Included among them are the famous marriage cup⁵ in the Civic Museum, Venice, the goblet⁶ in the Bargello, Florence, the goblets⁷ in the British Museum, and the goblet⁸ in the Metropolitan Museum.

All of these have common characteristics. They are of dark blue or dark green glass. The decoration occupies the largest surface, and represents a triumph of Justice, Venus, etc., the groups of figures sometimes separated by portrait medallions. A consider-



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able range and gradation of color in the enamel (least pronounced in the marriage cup at Venice) and a liberal quantity of gilding is used. The chief difference between them lies in the general shape, ranging from a slightly tapering tall cylindrical bowl with flat bottom, attached with a fluted edge resembling crimped metal, and seated upon a comparatively narrow ribbed stem with flaring base, to a broad bowl with rounded bottom on a low thick smooth stem terminating rather abruptly in the base. All seem somewhat more competently handled in the forming of the glass than the Bologna chalice, and composition and drawing of the decorative scenes are more advanced.

The Toledo Museum has now acquired a goblet⁹ similar to these rare and precious vessels. The body, of rich deep blue glass, is set upon a stem, the upper member of which is of clear glass, affixed to a central knob of dark blue glass gilded. The foot is missing and has been replaced by velvet-covered wood. The sides of the body are almost wholly covered with the enamel decoration. The scene represented is probably the Triumph of Fame, and follows the general scheme of the other vessels of the same type. The figure personifying Fame is seated in a glorified wheel-chair, a fanciful vehicle related somewhat remotely, perhaps, to a Roman chariot. The subject was a very popular one in the fifteenth century, deriving originally from the *Trionfi* of Petrarch. The many wood-cut illustrations of Triumphs appearing in the publications of the Venetian printers probably served as designs for the enamel painters.

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The technique of the decoration of the Toledo goblet is remarkably similar to that of those in the Bargello and the British Museum. The former represents the Triumph of Justice, the latter the Triumph of Venus. The correspondences are sufficient to indicate that all three came from the same period, the same workshop, and perhaps even the same hand. The two in European museums are very generally considered to have been made about 1475, and the same date can be assigned to our own.

All of these vessels probably came from the shop of Angelo Beroviero, the most distinguished of the Murano glassmakers of the fifteenth century. He died in 1461, but left his establishment in the capable hands of his sons. Angelo was long considered to have invented the process of enameling upon glass, but it is probable that he learned from his friend the alchemist Paolo da Pergola¹⁰ the art of mixing metallic oxides for the production of colored enamels. It is unlikely that he himself painted decorations upon glass, but highly probable that he had in his employ, and after him his sons had in theirs, workmen whom they instructed and guided in all the branches of the art of glass-making and decoration.

The Toledo goblet formerly belonged to the late George Eumorfopoulos of London. It was purchased at the auction of his collection at Sotheby's¹¹ on June 6, 1940, and arrived in this country after being shipped across the Atlantic in a boat which with others was under convoy by the British navy. It now forms a part of the Edward Drummond Libbey collection and is on display in Gallery 3 of the Museum, the earliest piece of Venetian glass in our possession.

¹ Dillon, *Glass*, London, 1907, p. 179-181, Pl. XXVIII.

² Dillon, Pl. 1.

³ Schmidt, *Das Glas*, Berlin, 1922, p. 57-8.

⁴ Schmidt, p. 90, fig. 52.

⁵ Dillon, p. 194, Pl. XXIX.

⁶ Schmidt, p. 91, fig. 53.

⁷ Dillon, p. 195; *Catalogue of the Collection of Glass formed by Felix Slade, Esq., F.S.A.*, London, 1871, pp. 68 ff., Pls. XII and XIII.

⁸ *Catalogue, A Special Exhibition of Glass from the Museum Collections*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1936, p. 23, fig. 19.

⁹ *Catalogue, Exhibition of Italian Art*, Burlington House, London, 1930, No. 935 G, repr. "Souvenir," Pl. 198. *DeLuxe Catalogue*, I, No. 1076, repr. II, Pl. CCCLI; *Apollo*, London, III, 16 (April 1926), repr. in color; *Burlington Magazine*, London, LVI, cccxxii (January 1930), Pl. IV (c).

¹⁰ *Allgemeines Künstler-Lexikon*, Leipzig, 1908, II, 521-22.

¹¹ *Catalogue, The Eumorfopoulos Collections Sale*, June 5, 6, 1940, Sotheby & Co., London, No. 220, p. 67, repr. in color, frontispiece.

A BITING DAUMIER CARICATURE

NO CARTOONIST of today is more severe pictorially on the prominent political figures than was Honoré Daumier, French painter and lithographer of the early 1800's. Whether the state of affairs in France brought forth the development of the satirical lithograph, or whether it was a mere fortunate chance that Daumier and others came upon the scene at the time, is difficult to say. At any rate, there was a wealth of material at hand for the use of the talented caricaturists who, as never before, were encouraged by the support of a large public and, even more fortunately, by the establishment of publications in which their works could be shown.

From among the group of young lithographers who became known for their political and social satires, none was more sharp and courageous than Honoré Daumier. He was born at Marseilles in 1808 and despite the discouragement of his father, worked at drawing secretly. His father obtained for him a position as "huissier," an usher or court bailiff, and while as a job it was unsuccessful, young Daumier made his first acquaintance thereby with those judges, barristers and others connected with the courts who later figured in so many of his most famous lithographs and water colors.

After attempts—all failures—to work in several other fields Daumier finally obtained the consent of his family to becoming an artist. Almost immediately he learned lithography and was able to earn a livelihood making plates for music publishers and others. At the same time he studied at Boudin's academy, working from nature and making a thorough study of anatomy.

Louis Philippe had come to the throne of France in 1830 and the ensuing years were full of internal strife and dissatisfaction. Philipon, a journalist, had founded *La Caricature* to attack the regime and assembled a staff of artists, Daumier among them. From 1833 to 1835 Daumier produced his most celebrated political caricatures, among them the famous *Gargantua*, for which he was imprisoned for six months; the *Journey Among an Enthusiastic Population*, showing Louis Philippe mounted on a lean horse crossing a desert plain strewn with corpses; and the dramatic *Rue Transnonain*, showing a murdered family—the victims of the brutality of soldiers intoxicated with power. An impression of this plate is in the Toledo Museum of Art's print collection. Belonging to the same set as the *Rue Transnonain*,—five prints furnished by Daumier for a collection called *L'Association Mensuelle*,—is *Le Ventre Legislatif*, recently added to the Museum's print collection.

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LE VENTRE LEGISLATIF

HONORE DAUMIER

FREDERICK B. AND KATE L. SHOEMAKER FUND PURCHASE

The subtitle of the print is "Aspect des bancs ministériels de la chambre improstituée de 1834," which might be translated as "Appearance of the ministerial benches of the incorruptible chamber of 1834." Thirty-five separate portraits, each a definite character study, depict in no complimentary terms the members of this legislative body. Stupidity, indifference, pomposity, guile, smugness and other traits are exemplified, and each head represents an actual personage, as we know from a series of individual caricatures and from small painted plaster heads for study purposes, which Daumier made before this lithograph. On none of the faces, not even suggested, do we find a trace of dignity or intellect and the speaker, undeserving though his appearance may suggest, receives no attention whatever.

As a pattern in black and white it is a magnificent work, and as a satire it is superb. Altogether the print is one of Daumier's masterpieces in lithography. He was a prolific artist, the great catalogue of Louis Delteil listing 3859 plates, a small but representative group of which are owned by the Toledo Museum. In subject his range was wide; the foibles of the middle class, the everyday life of the people, interested him as much as national affairs and in his works we find a more direct, expressive and truthful picture of the period than may be gained from reading volumes of history.

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The color plates of the Beroviero Goblet which adorn the cover of this issue of the Museum News were first used in connection with the article on the Eumorfopoulos Collection by Herbert Read published in the London magazine, *Apollo*. We are deeply indebted to the publishers of *Apollo*, who have generously lent us these plates for the duration of the war. The Goblet recently appeared as a full reproduction on the cover of the *Art News*, and its acquisition by the Museum has received notice in other publications.

The Christmas number of the *Illustrated London News* contains the best colored reproduction of the Holbein portrait of Catherine Howard from the Edward Drummond Libbey Collection which has ever been published. It appears there in connection with representations by artists contemporary with them of two other of Henry VIII's wives, Anne Boleyn and Anne of Cleves, the one now in the National Portrait Gallery, the other in St. John's College, Oxford.

Paintings from the Museum's collection are in constant demand for exhibition in other institutions. During December our Clouet, Portrait of Elisabeth of Valois, and Corneille de Lyon, Maréchal Bonnivet, were shown at the Art Gallery of Toronto in an exhibition for the benefit of the Canadian Red Cross. Dürer's Portrait of the Wife of Jobst Planckfelt is currently being shown at the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City, Missouri. We have just lent our Turner, Venice: The Campo Santo, to Johns Hopkins University; and the Matisse, Vase of Flowers, and Picasso, Woman with the Crow, have been invited for exhibition at the Los Angeles Museum from January 15 to February 28.

The first event in the Museum's Short Concert Series will take place on January 31, with the appearance of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. Tickets are still available for the series of four concerts, which includes besides the above-named orchestra, Joseph Szigeti, violinist, February 12; the Cleveland Orchestra, February 27; and Rose Bampton, soprano, March 28. There are no reserved seats and the exceedingly low price of \$2.50 has been set for the four concerts.

An exhibition of photographs of Greece and a collection of Greek embroideries and other textiles will be shown in Gallery 5 from January 10 throughout the remainder of the month. The Exhibition has been arranged under the auspices of the Toledo Committee for Greek Relief.

